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UNCLAS MANAMA 000162

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR ECA/PE/C/CU; NEA/PPD JDAVIES AND JKINCANNON;
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TAGS: [OIIP](#) [OEXC](#) [SCUL](#) [KPAO](#) [BA](#)

SUBJECT: ENAGING YOUNGER BAHRAINIS WITH ROCK AND ROLL

1. PAS Manama engaged younger and more diverse Bahraini audiences by programming American rock 'n' roll band "Circus Guy" from January 14-18, 2004. Circus Guy's program included performing live on Radio Bahrain's popular weekend music and interview program, an acoustic performance for critically ill children and their families at a local hospital, and performing at the Bahrain Mall, where Bahraini and Saudi families and teenagers congregate on weekends. Emboffs attending Circus Guy's performance at the Mall witnessed Saudi and Bahraini women in their black "abbayas" smiling and gently swaying to Elvis Presley along with their teenage sons and daughters. The four-member group also performed jointly with young Bahraini musicians at popular jazz club "Likwid" and conducted an afternoon guitar workshop for young music students at the Bahrain Music Institute. At "Likwid," Circus Guy jammed with local Bahraini band "Myoclonic Jerk" fusing diverse musical styles and promoting mutual understanding with an audience in the early twenties. All performances received good coverage in the Bahraini media.

2. Post recommends Circus Guy for similar programming in the region. The musicians were perfect good-will ambassadors, impressive in their performances, warm and culturally sensitive with Bahraini contacts, adaptable and easy to program. Since the musicians are in their twenties (and two are Iraqi-Americans), they related particularly well with youth and families. The vocalist is currently studying at the American University in Cairo, and she sang several songs in Arabic, to the delight of audiences.

3. Post warmly thanks PAS Kuwait for identifying Circus Guy and offering to share them with neighboring posts, and especially for taking care of the mind boggling logistics related to getting four musicians, and their gear, to the Gulf. We also appreciate the funding support provided by PAS Kuwait. Due to the continuing resolution, we would not have been able to program Circus Guy without Kuwait's cost sharing.

FORD